

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution. I would first like to commend my good friend and colleague from American Samoa, ENI FALEOMAVAEGA, for introducing this important measure. He has been the leader in Congress on matters related to the legacy of nuclear testing, both in the former Soviet Union and in the Pacific, and we greatly appreciate his hard work.

Madam Speaker, upon the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the newly-minted independent nation of Kazakhstan found itself in possession of the fourth largest nuclear arsenal in the world. Kazakhstan inherited more than 1,000 nuclear weapons and a squadron of heavy bombers armed with 370 nuclear warheads from the Soviet Union.

Rather than embrace their nuclear status, the people of Kazakhstan made a farsighted decision fifteen years ago. They closed their nation's nuclear test site, and yielded all of their inherited nuclear arsenal and weapons materials back to Russia.

Kazakhstan, the victim for so long of Soviet domination, completely and voluntarily rescinded their membership in the nuclear club. The nation proudly joined the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, or "NPT", as a non-nuclear weapon state, the first time a state that had possessed such a massive nuclear arsenal had done so.

While Kazakhstan made a wise decision to rid itself of its nuclear arsenal, the damage to the environment and to the health of the people of Kazakhstan will be felt for decades to come. Between 1945 and 1991, more than 450 nuclear tests were conducted at the Semipalatinsk test site, exposing more than 1.5 million innocent people to radiation and causing massive damage to the environment.

It is for that reason that the United States should work with Kazakhstan to establish a joint working group to help assess the environmental damage and health affects caused by the nuclear testing.

Madam Speaker, Kazakhstan's commitment to nuclear non-proliferation, and to nuclear disarmament, is an inspiring one, and a shining example for others to follow. It has strengthened immeasurably the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, and we greatly appreciate these actions.

Madam Speaker, I strongly support this resolution, and I urge all of my colleagues to join me in doing likewise.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 905.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was commu-

nicated to the House by Mr. Sherman Williams, one of his secretaries.

COMMENDING AND SUPPORTING RADIO AL MAHABA

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 784) commending and supporting Radio Al Mahaba, Iraq's first and only radio station for women.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 784

Whereas Radio Al Mahaba, Iraq's first and only radio station for women, went on the air on April 1, 2005;

Whereas Radio Al Mahaba is an educational tool, broadcasting in three different languages and giving women freedom to voice opinions and hear other opinions;

Whereas Radio Al Mahaba airs shows dedicated to women's rights and women's issues;

Whereas such shows are devoted to relationships, parenting, and other social topics;

Whereas despite terrible risks, the staff of Radio Al Mahaba works at the station because they want to reach out and touch people's lives, and they want to give hope, knowledge, empowerment, support, and a passage to freedom to Iraqi women;

Whereas Radio Al Mahaba, amid the struggles in Iraq, has followed the examples of the United States which guarantees freedoms of speech and the press, thereby encouraging Iraqis to build an open, democratic civil society;

Whereas Radio Al Mahaba has a positive, important role in educating women;

Whereas Radio Al Mahaba provides women with freedom of speech;

Whereas Radio Al Mahaba provides an opportunity for women to secure their role in the governance of a civil society within Iraq; and

Whereas Radio Al Mahaba meets a palpable need of Iraqi women: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) commends the efforts of Radio Al Mahaba to provide Iraqi women with freedom of speech and an opportunity for women to be included in and informed of the reconstruction of Iraq with an open, democratic civil society;

(2) supports the mission of Radio Al Mahaba; and

(3) urges Al Mahaba to continue its important work.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ACKERMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

□ 1600

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, House Resolution 784, introduced by our colleague Mrs. MCCARTHY, and a measure of which I am proud to be an original cosponsor, commends and supports Iraq's first and only radio station for women, Al Mahaba. All of us who have spent time in the Middle East know of the courage that it takes for women to take to the airwaves and provide education and information for women.

It was April 1, 2005, when Al Mahaba first went on the air. Despite personal risk, these courageous people took to the airwaves, in the words of the resolution, to reach out and touch people's lives, and give hope, knowledge empowerment, support and a passage to freedom to Iraqi women.

Its commitment was to serve as an important education resource for women, for broadcasting in three languages, and enabling women to hear, some for the very first time, messages about women's rights and women's issues. Radio Al Mahaba provides a forum for women to voice their opinions and to hear the opinions of other women who face the complexities of life for women in the Middle East.

The programming on Al Mahaba deals with issues specifically focused on women, which includes such important topics as relationships, parenting and other social issues which are not dealt with in other media. This radio station, which operates within the aura of what we in America know as our first amendment rights of freedom of speech and freedom of the press, is a wonderful example to Iraqi women and Iraqi people nationwide of the benefits of freedom. It plays an important role in paving the way for women to have more of a fundamental impact on Iraqi society.

House Resolution 784 appropriately commends the efforts of these pioneers. It supports the mission of Radio Al Mahaba and it encourages it to continue with its important work. I urge my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, to support this important resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, first I would like to commend and thank my good friend and colleague from New York, CAROLYN MCCARTHY, for sponsoring this very important measure.

Mr. Speaker, our intervention in Iraq and its aftermath have not been without controversy, but there are some developments there that I know every Member of this body is happy to embrace. Radio Al Mahaba represents just such a development.

Radio Al Mahaba is a unique phenomenon in the Middle East, a radio station for women dealing with issues of interest to women, and, more importantly, run by women.

In a society where a majority of women are illiterate, radio is a vital